

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants thank Examiner Langel for the courtesy of a telephone interview extended to Applicants' representative on January 16, 2009. During the interview, Applicants' process claim 6 was discussed with respect to being rewritten in independent form, the sintered body claims 3-5 were discussed, and the typographical errors of claims 8 and 11 were discussed. Comments/remarks similar to those presented during the interview are reproduced below.

Applicants also thank Examiner Langel for indicating that (i) claims 1, 2, 9, 10 and 12 are allowed (see Office Action, page 3); (ii) claims 8 and 11 are allowable if the typographical error is corrected (via telephone interview); and (iii) claims 6 and 7 should be allowable if the process of claim 6 expressly recites/requires the powder characteristics of original claim 1 (via telephone interview).

Claim Status

Claims 1, 2 and 6-12 are pending. Claims 3-5 are canceled without prejudice. Claims 6, 8 and 11 are currently amended. Claim 6 is rewritten in independent form and expressly recites that the aluminum nitride powder (of claim 1) is collected during the process. Claims 8 and 11 are amended to correct a typographical error; namely "60 volume%" to "65 volume%" as recited in the specification on page 10, lines 1-4. No new matter has been entered.

§102(b)/§103(a) Rejection of Claims 3-5

As these claims have been canceled, this rejection is now moot.

§102(b)/§103(a) and §103(a) Rejection of Claims 6 and 7

As clarified by Examiner Langel in the telephone interview, these rejections of claims 6 and 7 were maintained because it was the Office's position that the process of claim 6, as written, did not appear to *necessarily* produce the allowable powder of claim 1 including all of the characteristics of the powder as recited in claim 1. In line with Examiner Langel's suggestion, claim 6 has been rewritten in independent form and now expressly recites that the aluminum nitride powder (of claim 1) is collected during the process. As process claim 6, and dependent claim 7, now expressly include the allowable subject matter of the powder of original claim 1, these claims are neither anticipated by nor rendered obvious by the art of record for the same reasons that have rendered claim 1 allowable. Accordingly, these claims are in condition for allowance.

§112 Rejection of Claims 8 and 11

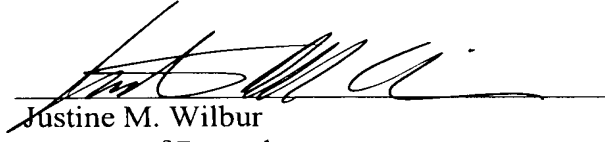
Claims 8 and 11 were rejected for lack of written description support for "50 to 60 volume%" because the specification only recites "50 to 65 volume%." This error has been corrected. No new issues would be raised by entering this amendment as the Examiner has correctly identified that the range of "50 to 65 volume%" is described in the specification. Accordingly, as claims 8 and 11 are directly dependent from allowable claim 1 and now have complete written description support, these claims are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Accordingly, as all pending claims are either already indicated as allowable or are now placed in condition for allowance, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections and passage of this case to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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